

ANNUAL REPORT FOR STATE FISCAL YEAR 2004

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES EXPEDITED SUBSTANCE ABUSE TREATMENT FUND

OVERVIEW

House Bill 2645 (Laws 1998) established through Arizona Revised Statute §8-812 the “Child Protective Services Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund”.

The Child Protective Services (CPS) Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund enables the Department of Economic Security (DES) to provide substance abuse treatment services so that permanency for dependent children can be expedited when parental substance abuse is a significant obstacle to family reunification. The Fund can also be used for substance abuse treatment for parents or guardians with a primary goal of facilitating family preservation, including services that maintain the family unit in a substance abuse treatment setting.

A.R.S. §8-812(F) and A.R.S. §8-812(G) require the Department make the following information available on the Department of Economic Security's web site, which includes the following:

- ◆ The number and percentage of parents and guardians who are offered treatment paid for with fund monies, and who complete treatment.
- ◆ The number of cases and children who are able to remain with or are returned to the custody of their parents or guardians as a result, in whole or in part, of treatment paid for with fund monies.
- ◆ The number of children who receive expedited permanent placement as a result of the availability of services paid for with fund monies.
- ◆ Data for cases that are part of expedited dependency proceedings.

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The Department maintains contracts with community agencies for the provision of substance abuse treatment and recovery support services. Expedited substance abuse treatment funds are integrated to ensure a comprehensive continuum of services are available in concert with Title XIX and TANF funded services. This integration has resulted in a significant increase in the number of clients served in whole or in part through this fund source.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

A.R.S. §8-812(C) specifies that the state appropriation cannot be used on behalf of a parent unless the following are true:

- ◆ The parent or guardian is a party to a dependency action concerning a child of the parent or a child under the care of the guardian.
- ◆ The parent or guardian is not eligible for benefits under Title XIX of the Social Security Act or private insurance, or the necessary substance abuse treatment service is not available under Title XIX of the Social Security Act or private insurance.
- ◆ The case plan provides for the children to either remain with or return to parent or guardian.
- ◆ The treatment is necessary for the case plan to be accomplished.
- ◆ A recipient of services that are paid for with fund monies shall sign a written statement as outlined in the legislation.

STATE FISCAL YEAR 2004 APPROPRIATION

The sum of \$224,500 was appropriated to the department for State Fiscal Year 2004 for the CPS Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund. This appropriation was exempt from A.R.S. §35-190 relating to lapsing of appropriation.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

A.R.S. §8-812(F.1.): The number and percentage of parents and guardians who are offered treatment paid for with Fund monies and who complete treatment.

One-hundred and twenty parents were provided services from the Fund appropriation. These clients include thirty-one parents who continued treatment authorized in the prior fiscal year. Of all participant parents, thirty-two clients (27%) have completed treatment; fifty-nine clients (49%) left treatment prior to completion, while the remaining twenty-nine parents (24%) continue to receive treatment and/or supportive services.

A.R.S. §8-812(F.2.): The number of cases and children who are able to remain with, or be returned to the custody of their parents or guardians as a result, in whole or in part, of treatment paid for with Fund monies.

Eighty-one children in thirty-one cases were able to remain with their parents or were returned to their parents as a result of treatment paid for with Fund monies.

A.R.S. §8-812(F.3.): The number of children who receive expedited permanent placement as a result of the availability of services paid for with Fund monies.

In addition to those eighty-one children who received expedited placement with their parents, ninety-five children were able to achieve permanency through an alternative reunification plan such as guardianship, adoption or other Court approved permanency goals as a result of the Fund monies.

The parents of one hundred and three children continue with reunification efforts with their children.

A.R.S. §8-812(G): Data for cases that are part of the expedited proceedings.

One hundred and fifteen cases were part of an expedited court proceeding.

CONCLUSION

The Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund has enabled the Department to provide comprehensive substance abuse and supportive services for clients involved in the child welfare system. The Fund ensures a comprehensive continuum of services is available to individuals who might be ineligible to receive services from another source or to supplement treatment services until eligibility is determined.

The provision of these services continues to assist the Department in making reasonable efforts to reunify families. Many parents have successfully completed treatment and have been reunified with their children resulting in improvement in child safety and well-being. When examining “completion” of treatment, consideration of the wide range in substance use severity levels of the individuals referred that is beyond the scope of this project is critical to determine the overall effectiveness of the interventions.

Annual Report
CPS Expedited Substance Abuse Treatment Fund

Services for individuals with severe and chronic addiction disorders, including clients with co-occurring mental health problems may require long-term stabilization and repeated support over time. Addiction problems may be so severe that the individual may have been unable to make the necessary changes that would enable their child to be reunited within the timeframes established by the Adoptions and Safe Families Act of 1997. Although one –half of the clients did not complete the recommended treatment; the availability of appropriate substance abuse treatment services through the Fund has allowed case managers to pursue, when necessary, alternative permanency plans for children more expeditiously.